

from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for their support and their leadership in bringing this important legislation before the floor.

I am pleased to bring to the floor today a bill that will benefit the entire Pacific region. I am honored and proud to sponsor this legislation.

While they may be overlooked when listing our great allies, the United States has long and profound relationships with the Pacific Island nations that stretch back more than two centuries. With consideration of this legislation today, Congress will act to significantly strengthen this vitally important alliance.

The Pacific Island nations have long been integral to our strategic interests, from the vital role they played in the Pacific theatre of operations during World War II to their critical role that they played in the conduct of our nuclear testing and missile defense system that even today is critical to our overall military and strategic interests in this important region of the world.

We work closely with the nations of the Pacific to combat transnational threats, particularly the rapidly increasing peril posed by global warming. The people of the Pacific have also fought and sacrificed side-by-side with American soldiers in conflicts from World War II to the current war in Iraq.

But as we look towards the Pacific, we must step up both our multilateral and bilateral relationships to provide critically needed assistance to ensure that other countries do not fill the void. Foreign assistance and scholarship offerings from other countries to the Pacific Island nations has increased dramatically in recent years. Such aid comes with few requirements for good governance and few environmental or labor standards.

The bottom line, Madam Speaker, our public diplomacy program and educational and cultural exchanges with the Pacific Island nations is shameful and without excuse.

Left unchecked, such foreign assistance from other countries can cause further instability, leaving these island nations to believe the United States no longer is interested to assist them, and thereby leave them vulnerable to establish friendships with countries that do not necessarily support our interests in this vast region of the world.

We must act now to fill the void and exert our influence. The Pacific Island Economic and Educational Development Act of 2007 seeks to address the development needs of our allies in the Pacific Islands and to engage the United States in the region more deeply.

This legislation pushes for greater activity in the Pacific Islands by authorizing the administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development to listen to the needs of the leaders of the Pacific Islands and to provide assistance accordingly. This task would be significantly easier if USAID rees-

tablished a serious presence in the Pacific Island region, something that has been long overdue.

The legislation also authorizes funds to increase the number of Fulbright scholars from the Pacific islands, making use of our most successful international educational program to increase the training of future leaders of the Pacific Islands. Fostering educational opportunities overseas is one of this government's strongest and most effective public diplomacy tools. Leveraging these grants would represent a tremendous way of reengaging with these critical allies in the Pacific region.

Under section 2 of this bill now entitled Pacific Island Country Exchanges, it is the intent of Congress to specifically increase funding for the U.S.-South Pacific Scholarship program, a program which has been in place since 1994, and has been administered by the East-West Center in Honolulu under the direction of the U.S. Department of State. The U.S.-South Pacific Scholarship program has successfully trained many Pacific Island leaders, and it is imperative to U.S. interests in the region that we continue this program.

In this new world where shipping is vulnerable to terrorism and climate change is a top priority, we need these Pacific Island nations as much as they need us. Let's commit to reengaging with them, to strengthening our alliances with them, and to aiding them in every way possible.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3062, the Pacific Island Economic and Educational Development Act. The island nations of the South Pacific, which include longstanding friends of the United States, face continuing challenges in development and education.

I want to commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for his leadership in introducing this legislation and for working with us in the committee to refine it during the committee process.

Because the amended text deals with authorizations, not mandates or appropriations, it signals congressional interest in deepening our cooperation with the people of the Pacific Islands, while also allowing executive branch agencies appropriate discretion in carrying out such programs.

The text before us will increase the amounts authorized for U.S. educational and cultural exchanges with South Pacific nations to \$1 million in each of the next 2 fiscal years, establish a Fulbright exchange program for Pacific Island students, and underscore the interests of the United States Congress in making appropriate USAID

technical assistance available to Pacific Island governments.

I thank the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for accommodating some of our suggested changes. I am pleased to support the amended text.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3062, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

UNITED STATES-POLAND PARLIAMENTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM ACT OF 2007

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 377) to establish a United States-Poland parliamentary youth exchange program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 377

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "United States-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The United States established diplomatic relations with the newly-formed Polish Republic in April 1919.

(2) The United States and Poland have enjoyed close bilateral relations since 1989.

(3) Poland became a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in March 1999.

(4) Poland became a member of the European Union (EU) in May 2004.

(5) Poland has been a strong supporter, both diplomatically and militarily, of efforts led by the United States to combat global terrorism and has contributed troops to the United States-led coalitions in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

(6) Poland cooperates closely with the United States on such issues as democratization, nuclear proliferation, human rights, regional cooperation in Eastern Europe, and reform of the United Nations.

(7) The United States and Poland seek to ensure enduring ties between both governments and societies.

(8) It is important to invest in the youth of the United States and Poland in order to help ensure long-lasting ties between both societies.

(9) It is in the interest of the United States to preserve a United States presence in Europe and to continue to contribute to the development of transatlantic relationships.

(10) Poland for many years received international and United States financial assistance and is now determined to invest its own

resources toward attaining its shared desire with the United States to develop international cooperation.

SEC. 3. UNITED STATES-POLAND PARLIAMENTARY YOUTH EXCHANGE PROGRAM.

(a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of State, in cooperation with the Government of Poland, may establish and carry out a parliamentary exchange program for youth of the United States and Poland.

(b) **DESIGNATION.**—The youth exchange program carried out under this subsection shall be known as the “United States-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program”.

(c) **PURPOSE.**—The purpose of the youth exchange program is to demonstrate to the youth of the United States and Poland the benefits of friendly cooperation between the United States and Poland based on common political and cultural values.

(d) **ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS.**—An individual is eligible for participation in the youth exchange program if the individual—

(1) is a citizen or national of the United States or of Poland;

(2) is under the age of 19 years;

(3) is a student who is enrolled and in good standing at a secondary school in the United States or Poland;

(4) has been accepted for up to one academic year of study in a program of study abroad approved for credit at such school; and

(5) meets any other qualifications that the Secretary of State may establish for purposes of the program.

(e) **PROGRAM ELEMENTS.**—Under the youth exchange program, eligible participants selected for participation in the program shall—

(1) live in and attend a public secondary school in the host country for a period of one academic year;

(2) while attending public school in the host country, undertake academic studies in the host country, with particular emphasis on the history, constitution, and political development of the host country;

(3) be eligible, either during or after the completion of such academic studies, for an internship in an appropriate position in the host country; and

(4) engage in such other activities as the President considers appropriate to achieve the purpose of the program.

SEC. 4. ANNUAL REPORT TO CONGRESS.

The Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives an annual report on the United States-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program established under this Act. Each annual report shall include—

(1) information on the implementation of the Program during the preceding year;

(2) the number of participants in the Program during such year;

(3) the names and locations of the secondary schools in the United States and Poland attended by such participants;

(4) a description of the areas of study of such participants during their participation in the Program;

(5) a description of any internships taken by such participants during their participation in the Program; and

(6) a description of any other activities such participants carried out during their participation in the Program.

SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appropriated for the Department of State for fiscal year 2008 such sums as may be necessary to carry out the youth exchange program authorized by this Act.

(b) **AVAILABILITY.**—Amounts authorized to be appropriated by subsection (a) shall remain available until expended.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. **FALEOMAVAEGA**) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. **ROS-LEHTINEN**) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. **FALEOMAVAEGA**. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The **SPEAKER** pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

Mr. **FALEOMAVAEGA**. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me first thank our distinguished chairman of the committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. **LANTOS**), and our senior ranking member, the gentlelady from Florida, for their support and for their leadership in bringing this bill before the floor.

And let me thank our eminent colleague in the other Chamber, the distinguished Senator from Indiana (Senator **LUGAR**) for his leadership on this important issue. It is exemplary of his sage leadership on so many foreign affairs matters.

Madam Speaker, in 1777, while serving the American cause in Paris, Benjamin Franklin discovered a brilliant Polish military tactician. His name was Casimir Pulaski. A leader in Poland's bitter campaign to beat back Russia, the nobleman Pulaski sacrificed his status in Europe to join the American revolution in the New World. It did not take long for George Washington to recognize the great talent he had on his hands. He promoted Pulaski to brigadier general, placing him in charge of four horse brigades.

Pulaski's prowess and strategic skill during the Revolutionary War became renowned. So dedicated was he to our cause that when funding ran low among the colonials, he used some of his own money to purchase equipment for his men.

General Pulaski, who eventually went down in the history books as the father of the American cavalry, is just one of the many important Polish figures who have contributed greatly to the United States and to the world. The relationship between the people of our two countries has flourished in recent years since the fall of communism, but it actually dates back centuries to the founding of our Nation.

Today, this Congress aims to help the people of Poland rear the next generation of productive, inventive and stand-out individuals. This bill authorizes an educational exchange program between our two nations that promises to be mutually beneficial and strengthen the alliance between our two nations.

This program will be identical in its structure and operation to the successful Congress-Bundestag exchange that was launched in 1983. Over the last quarter century, thousands of young Americans and Germans have seized the opportunity to spend an academic year living and studying with their foreign peers.

As a result, these secondary school students have gained a better understanding of each other's way of life and have begun developing into citizens of the world. With the authorization and funding of the bilateral initiative before us today, we will extend the same opportunities to our young friends in Poland.

Cross-cultural exchange is the most powerful way of creating harmony among nations. And study abroad programs represent the most powerful type of exchange because they foster understanding and education about other nations at an early age. The country of Poland is one of our most important allies in Europe, has supported us in our fight against terrorism, and stood with us by contributing troops to Afghanistan and Iraq. The Polish people have made great strides since the fall of communism liberalizing their economy, joining NATO in 1999, and becoming a Member of the European Union in 2004.

It is high time that we recognize and advance Poland's place in the world, as well as our special relationship with that nation, by initiating a robust educational exchange program.

Madam Speaker, I wholeheartedly support this proposed bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. **ROS-LEHTINEN**. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of Senate bill 377, the United States-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program Act.

This bill, introduced by Senator **LUGAR**, and already passed by the Senate in March, would establish a formal parliamentary youth exchange program for American and Polish secondary students. The purpose of this exchange program is to demonstrate to the youth of Poland and to the United States the benefits of friendly cooperation based on our shared political and cultural values.

The United States and Poland have enjoyed close bilateral relations since the end of the Cold War. Poland has supported U.S.-led efforts to fight global terrorism, has contributed troops to coalition forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, and has cooperated closely with the United States to promote democracy and human rights around the world and to reform the United Nations.

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By focusing on the source of our common future, our young people, this bill will further cement the friendship and the ideals that our two nations already

share. Therefore, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this worthwhile endeavor.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, it is with pleasure that I yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut and a member of the Financial Services and Government Reform Committees, Congressman MURPHY.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support today of S. 377, the United States and Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program Act.

Poland, as has been said by both of our previous speakers, has demonstrated an amazing commitment both to democratic values and to their role as an ally of the United States. I remember, as a teenager, if I might date myself, watching in rapt attention as Lech Walesa and his solidarity movement defeated the Communist Party in Poland in parliamentary elections, and then watching Walesa go on to become president of Poland in 1990. That solidarity movement heralded the collapse of communism across Eastern Europe.

This United States and Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange will allow American students to learn much more about this very important heritage of our neighbors in Eastern Europe. Eligible participants in the program will attend a public high school for one academic year and enroll in courses that place a particular emphasis on their host country's history, the establishment of its Constitution, the nation's birth and its political development.

Though my last name might not give a hint to this, I am a very proud Polish American. My mother's family emigrated from Poland to New Britain, Connecticut some generations ago. And if you have a chance to drive through the great State of Connecticut and you're looking for a great place to grab a bite to eat, stop off in New Britain, Connecticut. Go to Broad Street, where we still have Polish language storefronts selling some of the best Polish food that you'll find in eastern Connecticut.

And I appreciate the gentleman spending a little time remarking about General Pulaski. We take that legacy very seriously in New Britain. We still celebrate Pulaski Day with a Pulaski parade that runs not very far from Pulaski School and ends up at the Pulaski Club. So we are very serious students of Polish history in New Britain, Connecticut, and I can't think of a better program than one such as this that will allow children of a community such as ours in New Britain, whose forefathers came from that country, to be able to go there and strengthen their appreciation for that culture and that country's heritage.

I'd like to thank Representative VISCLOSKEY, especially, and Representative EMANUEL for bringing this legislation

before the House floor today and, of course, Senator LUGAR for being such a champion in the Senate. This will mean a great deal to our small community of New Britain and the entire Polish American community in the Fifth District of Connecticut.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Connecticut and his support and statement. Nothing like having an Irish Polish American to be supportive of his proposed legislation.

Madam Speaker, I would love to yield 5 minutes now to my dear friend, distinguished member of the Appropriations Committee, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKEY). That's a good Polish name.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 377, the United States and Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program Act of 2007. I am the sponsor of the House version of this legislation, and I would like to thank my 13 colleagues, including the gentleman from Connecticut, who are cosponsors of the measure.

I would especially like to thank the distinguished senior Senator from the State of Indiana, RICHARD LUGAR, for originating this legislation and introducing it in the other body. And I would be remiss if I did not thank the chairman of the subcommittee, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), as well as the ranking member of the full committee, the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), as well as Mr. LANTOS and the members of the committee for their consideration of the measure.

It is my sincere hope that this legislation will become the foundation for future youth exchange programs around the world. As technology and transportation makes the world more and more interconnected, it is essential that our youth and future leaders have firsthand experiences in other cultures when making decisions. A lot can be learned about a different culture from a book or a picture, but it is not nearly the same as living, studying and working in another culture for an entire year, which is what the U.S.-Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program will enable youths from American and Polish high schools to do.

Senator LUGAR has been a guiding light in promoting cultural exchange programs between America and countless other countries throughout his tenure, and it has been my privilege to work with him on this legislation. The Senator's genuine interest in the cultures of the world is reflected in all his actions, and he understands the priceless value of cultural exchange programs as embodied in the U.S. and Poland Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program. This program will have a profound effect on the youth of our two

countries, and it can only strengthen the unbreakable friendship between the United States and Poland.

I too am very proud of the Polish community in Indiana's First Congressional District. This proud community is an integral part of the greater northwest area community in Indiana, and enhances the culture of my district in countless ways. I am happy that the U.S. and Poland Youth Exchange Program will allow all facets of the Polish culture to be experienced firsthand by American youth.

Madam Speaker, we should not delay in this opportunity for our youth to be immersed in Poland's rich culture and in this opportunity to share our culture with Polish youth. And I would urge my colleagues to support the measure.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana for his most eloquent speech.

At this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to my good friend from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE), a senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, let me commend Senator LUGAR for this fine legislation. Senator LUGAR is such an outstanding leader.

And I would also like to say that Count Casimir Pulaski was a person, as a historian, that did so much in the Revolutionary War. We actually defeated Cromwell at the major battle.

I had the opportunity also to teach at Pulaski School in New Jersey when I was a school teacher in Passaic, and the Polish community was very strong in that area. And so I learned a lot, from Yak Samas and Dobcha, from my students and their parents.

I think that parliamentary exchanges are outstanding. As we remember Lech Walesa and the solidarity movement, we do see the challenge for the shipyards there in Poland, but hopefully they will be able to sustain themselves. I think that these various types of parliamentary exchanges do a great deal.

I visited Poland in 1967 and went back again in the late 1990s and early 2000 to see the tremendous difference of the 1967 Poland that was drab and going through many, many problems with pollution and the communist system. But with the breakdown of the Warsaw Pact and Poland being able to have democracy, it's really a tremendous country. And as a member of the House Democratic Assistance Corporation here in the House, we certainly strongly push for parliamentary exchanges, and so I certainly support this.

I thank Mr. ENI FALEOMAVAEGA for bringing this to the floor.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 377.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH BIRTHDAY OF DESMOND MPILO TUTU

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 34) recognizing the 75th birthday of Desmond Mpilo Tutu, South African Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 34

Whereas Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu has been recognized as one of the 20th century's leaders for freedom, justice, and human rights for all;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu, as a religious leader and Secretary-General of the South African Council of Churches from 1976 until 1978, worked against apartheid in South Africa with the agreement of nearly all South African churches;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu consistently advocated reconciliation between all parties involved in apartheid and, though he was most firm in denouncing South Africa's white-ruled government, Archbishop Tutu was also harsh in his criticism of the violent tactics of some anti-apartheid groups and denounced terrorism;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu spoke strongly in support of non-violent change and economic sanctions against South Africa and as a result had his passport revoked by the South African Government;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu led a historical march to a whites-only beach, where he and supporters were chased off with whips;

Whereas, on October 16, 1984, Archbishop Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of his outstanding leadership, courage, heroism, and use of nonviolence in the struggle against apartheid, and the Nobel Committee cited his "role as a unifying leader figure in the campaign to resolve the problem of apartheid in South Africa";

Whereas a month after winning the Nobel Peace Prize, Archbishop Tutu was elected as the first black Anglican bishop of Johannesburg;

Whereas, on September 7, 1986, Archbishop Tutu became the first black person to lead the Anglican Church in South Africa;

Whereas, in 1994, after the end of apartheid and the election of President Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Tutu was appointed as Chairman of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to investigate apartheid-era crimes, where his policy of forgiveness and reconciliation has become an international example of conflict resolution, and a trusted method of post-conflict reconstruction;

Whereas, on October 7, 1931, Archbishop Tutu was born in Klerksdorp, Transvaal, to a school teacher and an uneducated mother and was educated at Johannesburg Bantu High School;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu trained as a high school teacher at Pretoria Bantu Normal College and graduated from the University of South Africa in 1954, and after teaching for three years was ordained as a priest in 1960;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu studied theology in England in 1962, received a Masters of Theology from University of London in 1966, was appointed as the first black South African to hold the position of Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg in 1975, and became the first black General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches in 1978;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu is an international lecturer and philosopher and has received honorary doctorates from ten leading universities in the United States, Britain, and Germany;

Whereas Archbishop Tutu has been awarded a number of prestigious awards, including the Order for Meritorious Award (Gold), the Archbishop of Canterbury's Award for Outstanding Service to the Anglican Communion, the Prix d'Athene, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award of Annual Black American Heroes and Heroines Day;

Whereas out of deep concern for the challenges facing all of the people of the world, in July 2007 Archbishop Tutu helped assemble The Elders, an historic group of world leaders seeking to contribute their wisdom, independent leadership, and integrity in tackling some of the world's toughest problems;

Whereas October 7, 2007, will mark the 76th birthday of Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu; and

Whereas Archbishop Tutu has fought for a democratic and just society without racial divisions, a common system of education, a world which promotes the rights and opportunities of the marginalized, disadvantaged, and disenfranchised, and continues to pursue an active international ministry of peace: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) honors the accomplishments of Archbishop Desmond Mpilo Tutu;

(2) recognizes and congratulates his consistent efforts to promote dialogue to peacefully resolve conflicts between people in Africa and around the world; and

(3) extols the contributions of Archbishop Tutu to South Africa, the United States, and the international community.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, again I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I would like again to thank our distinguished chairman of

the committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), and our senior ranking member of the committee, the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for their support in bringing this legislation to the floor.

I would particularly like to thank my distinguished colleague, the chief sponsor of this legislation, the gentlelady from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) for introducing this important resolution to honor Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa for his lifetime of human rights work.

Madam Speaker, Archbishop Tutu is unquestionably one of the most important and accomplished advocates of human rights and peace on the face of this planet. In the past few years, Bishop Tutu has worked tirelessly to promote religious freedom and self-sovereignty around the world, using his reputation and his work in South Africa as a launching pad to do good. For instance, he has worked to highlight the horrendous human rights situation in Burma and repeatedly called on the Burmese Government to free the champion of democracy there, Aung San Suu Kyi.

But of all his work for humankind, he is perhaps best known for chairing the South Africa Peace and Reconciliation Commission after the scourge of apartheid ended in that nation.

Under the rule of the Afrikaner Nationalist Party, black South Africans were subjected to unspeakable dehumanizing social policies and draconian laws. These terrible measures separated families, denied a decent education to millions of children, and forced hundreds of thousands from their homes into segregated territories, or bantustans.

Given the nature of the oppression, South Africa could have been a country washed in blood by black Africans seeking revenge once white minority rule ended. But through his characteristic patience and wisdom, Bishop Tutu helped guide South Africans, black, brown and white, through a national process of reconciliation, a forum where the horrors of apartheid were told by both victims and perpetrators. And most importantly, there was no retribution, only truth and reconciliation.

Bishop Tutu and his colleagues traveled throughout South Africa, from village to village, and allowed apartheid's victims to speak as long as they needed to tell their stories. For days at a time he sat and listened to stories of the hellish nightmare innocent victims of apartheid had to endure.

The process of simply telling proved an enormous healing experience for individuals in the South African nation. And the stories have been archived so that South Africans in the future can know their past and can appreciate their present.

This effort, and his spiritual leadership throughout the trying times of his nation made Bishop Tutu an international hero. He is a human rights